



U.S. COAST GUARD



Homeland Security

Flag Voice 249

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UNIFORM INSIGNIAS FOR NEW CWO SPECIALTIES UPDATE

As promised in my Flag Voice 247 about 5 weeks ago, this is an update on the continuing efforts to procure and distribute uniform insignias for the four new CWO specialties (INV, MSS, ISM, and OSS) in preparation for the 1 June 2005 implementation date. In summary, some uniform insignia items will be delivered by 1 June, others will not be available until mid-June. We've made a conscious decision to produce the high-demand, most frequently worn insignia items first in a trade-off to have as many CWOs as possible in these new specialties proudly wearing their new insignias by the 1 June date.

Production of enhanced shoulder boards is well underway, and the first shipment will be delivered to the Coast Guard by Thursday, 19 May 2005. Based on the current production schedule, we expect to receive an additional shipment of enhanced shoulder boards every two days until the order is filled in early June. Similarly, the delivery of both metal and sew-on collar insignias will begin on Friday, 20 May 2005 and continue until the order is filled in early June.

Because of the compressed production schedule, we have had to prioritize the manufacturer's production capacity. Consequently, we are not going to be able to deliver the hard shoulder boards or embroidered service dress sleeve insignias by 1 June 05. The shipment of these two items will be completed by mid-June following the production and distribution of the higher demand items. Regrettably, this is going to create a challenge for those in need of a service dress uniform during the month of June.

Since my last update, the Coast Guard Exchange System (CGES) has stepped in to take on distribution of these new items in order to meet the 1 June 05 target date. In an effort to provide one-stop shopping, CGES has arranged for the Exchange at TRACEN Yorktown (the closest facility to the factory) to serve as the single point of contact for the initial distribution. I anticipate that stocks of these new insignia items will not be available at the UDC until this fall. Those individuals who previously placed an order with the UDC have already been contacted by email and directed to contact the Yorktown Exchange to complete a new order form. It is essential that all prospective CWOs in any of the four new specialties, contact CGES Yorktown to place their order. To date, only 115 of an estimated 400 CWOs have placed an order. Orders may be placed in one of three ways: a downloadable fax order form is available at <http://www.cg-exchange.com> which, once completed, can be faxed to the Yorktown Exchange at 757-856-2385, telephone orders using credit cards may be placed by calling the Yorktown Exchange at 757-856-2155, or personal check orders can be placed by mailing the completed downloadable order form and check to:

USCG Exchange
Attn: Uniform Department
U.S. Coast Guard Training Center
End of Route 238
Yorktown, VA 23690-5000

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Prices for the new items are as follows:

Enhanced shoulder boards: \$29.99
Hard shoulder boards: \$33.99
Metal collar insignia (each): \$4.39
Embroidered collar insignia (each): \$1.59
SDB jacket sleeve device: \$15.99

To expedite this one-time delivery, shipping will be at no cost to the member. While this timeline isn't what we were shooting for, we hope to get all orders for enhanced shoulder boards and collar devices in the mail in time for a 1 June delivery through considerable effort by the manufacturer, CGES, and the team at the Exchange in Yorktown. That said, if anyone does not receive these items by 1 June, they should wear the insignia appropriate to their legacy rating until their new insignias arrive. Appointments to CWO scheduled for 1 June will take place without delay.

As always, I appreciate your continued patience as we work to introduce these four new CWO specialties.

Regards,

RADM Kenneth T. Venuto
Ken Venuto

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